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Dear Friends and Spiritual Family,

Even though we experienced a very dry winter here at Questhaven, we were blessed by several storms in early March. One such storm brought a heavy downpour of hail. It was a vitalizing experience to see the grounds covered with an inch of white ice. The hills, roads and rooftops looked like a winter wonderland. How refreshing it was to see these grounds with new eyes. It reminded me instantly that there is a Divine Reality about us at all times though our physical senses may not realize it. We are constantly being guided, blessed and nourished by Its attention. With the blanket of white freshness came an acknowledgment of the loving care we are constantly in. What a good reminder it was to lift our consciousness upward.

It evoked a lesson that I recently had read. The Great Ones said, “*We must regularly increase our worship of the unknown and mysteriously ever-present Reality of wonder around us.*” They can’t do anything directly to make us sense them more. We have to develop that open door within us. We must come to that place with our “*soul wrapped in the flame of holy eagerness.*”

Here at Questhaven, we want all who enter to discover this open door of consciousness that lifts their attention to the Living Waters of our Lord Christ to whom every aspect of these grounds is consecrated. It is not enough to merely accept God in our life, but discover what more lies in our awareness of Him beyond the horizon. It is important to us that even our buildings nurture this development in our consciousness. One such building has been calling out to us for some time for needed help in this regard. El Deseo, one of the original adobe buildings designed by Flower A. Newhouse herself, has been asking for a revitalization of its living space. With over sixty years of loving service, it was time to rekindle its energies of providing an environment for guests to awaken to the Christ within. While work on that project has been mostly completed, it is tied to the even bigger project of restoring Chapelito. A building fund has been created for those of you who would like to contribute to their renewal.

The recent experiences of Lent and Easter also provided us great opportunities to open our doors of consciousness and character development anew. This holy season brought the recharging of the rebirth of the Christ Spirit within us. This ministry focused our attention on the awareness that we are all spiritually *one* on this planet; that all life forms, religions and races fall under our Lord’s loving care; that truly, all paths lead to God through Him, and that there is unity in eternity. With it came the knowing that as we work to align our consciousness with God, we help the world align with God. So it is time for us to open our doors of consciousness to the Divine recharging that is streaming down upon us here and now.

The Great Ones are calling upon us. As individuals, a ministry and part of humanity, it is our grand opportunity to listen and to know “*that one can touch such a live-wire of contact if he but achieve within himself the surrendered dedication of all his being to such Light.*”

Your brother in Christ,
Rev. Blake Isaac

A new world opens when we see—

God's Miracles in Nature

By Rev. Flower A. Newhouse

An excerpt from Inspiration Magazine, September 1944.



*Rev. Flower A. Newhouse,
founder of
Questhaven Retreat,
(photo from 1979).*

When people look on Nature, their differences melt in a unity of appreciative agreement. Not many men and women can live in the country, scale mountain peaks, or mine the earth's treasures, but most of them do love the great out-of-doors. People enjoy a fellowship through a mutual love of Nature that they might not be able to realize in their other vocational and recreational habits.

Nature frees us from the cobwebs of materialism—from the shallowness of our daily moods and occupations. Its persuasive presence penetrates our surface selves and inspires us into thinking and feeling from interior depths that are seldom sounded.

Arabs entertain the belief that mountains are sacred. They deem it wise to climb a tall mountain occasionally, because from its height man can see how insignificant he is, how easily the world can get along without him. This practice of the Arabs induces not only a genuine reverence and humility, but also the resolve to be above insignificance through a largeness of Spirit Within.

People reveal their characters by the attention they pay Nature. Appreciation of the open spaces is one of the petals of blossoming greatness. The more accustomed a man is to frequenting the habitats of the outdoors, the more likely is he to be found using Georgia Harkness' invocation:

"Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire, O still small voice of calm."

World-shaking events tend to exhaust and make arid the minds and souls of the race. What comfort and refreshment we find when we turn our attention upon the serenity and magnanimity of Nature! The world restrains our moral improvement, but the outdoors increases it. We become released, original, and fruitful in its unhurried, calm presence. Here “no blade of grass has ever broken a divine commandment. No flower has ever blushed in guilt—no tree has ever lifted itself against the Most High.”

“If indeed thy heart were right, then would every creature be to thee a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine.”

In the tranquil, joyous solitude of garden, forest, lakeside, or mountain height, every dawn, noontide and twilight would acquaint us with life as it is intended to be expressed. The wholeness and purity of Nature itself would heal our natures.

The Inner Side of Nature

In times of stress, as well as in times of peace, we may learn to draw upon the inner energies which Nature releases so generously throughout the earth. To be enlightened by the spirit brooding over all, we need to approach Nature with our physical senses alert, and with our superphysical faculties active as well.

When we are outwardly and inwardly responsive, we realize how patiently the hills worship God, and how exultantly the birds glorify Him with praises. Here, where there is no pretense or excitement, we sense a purity and trust opening in us like morning glories opening to the sun. We see that flowers are unassuming, trees are strong, and valleys are harbors of peace. In such moments of attuned listening and seeing, simple meanings become unveiled, profound immensities.

Helen Keller knew this inner communion with the spirit of Nature. On one of her nature walks, when in an uplifted state of consciousness, she passed trees which seemed to emanate this message to her, “All that is in you has always been and always will be. Every atom and every impulse of you began in eternity with us, and with us will return to eternity.”

Through his enlightenments in Nature, Emerson believed that plants were only a lower form of potential divinity than man. He said of growing things, “They are vessels of health and vigor, ever going towards consciousness. Trees are imperfect men and they seem to sense their imprisonment rooted in the ground.”

Let us begin now to practice a true, rich enjoyment of Nature. We will want to discover the imprint of God in His world. We will desire to find His woodland temples—and to attend all His outdoor symphonies!

The Way Is Simple

The Way is simple! It is our being overburdened and overcast by earthly thoughts and tendencies that obscures Him from our sight. For some, reverence is arrived at only after a ceremony of meditation, prayer, and the singing of hymns. For others, beauty is itself a flaming sacrament, and these persons are transported from the temporal to the eternal sense of values by their instantaneous response to the Supreme Spirit behind all things.

Four Objectives

Those who are in earnest will try each day to:

1. Discern God’s nearness and His secrets with watchful eyes.
2. Appreciate the colors, the anthems of pine tree and bird, and the variations of landscape which pervade our globe. The fact that God is an artist is revealed in His love for beauty and for song. How lavish He is in His use of color—how mighty in His ruling of the elements.
3. Realize God in all His manifestations. Then when we glance at a weed, even it shall become beautiful to us.
4. Understand that everything is infinitely more purposeful, lovely, and ensouled than we have dreamed. Try to touch inner meanings and inbreathe inner beauties which are disclosed by the spirit of Nature. “Trails that follow mountains lead at last to God,” writes Anne Campbell. Our instinctive reaction to beauty, and our gratitude for the inner shining sublimity behind all things is our inmost admission that, “My help cometh from the Lord which made *heaven and Earth.*”

Let Nature Instruct You

by Jean Michalewicz

“*Speak to the earth, and it will teach you.*” Job 12:8

In “Finding Enlightenment Through Nature” (*The Journey Upward*), Flower A. Newhouse encourages us to “address the spirit of nature silently. Tell it we reverently seek teaching and revelation from its school of wisdom.”

The pineal and pituitary glands, which are related to higher-dimensional realities and their activities, are awakened when we make the effort to contact that which lies beyond our outer senses. Through the activity of these centers, we are able to receive the inflow of radiant beams from the inner worlds. The outer world of nature is a reflection of the beauty and power that exists within the inner worlds.

When we go into nature with open minds and hearts, we can receive inspiration and understanding that flow from levels beyond our usual reasoning. We can make contact with the angels and devas that inhabit the higher dimensions of the natural world. They have much to teach us when we are receptive.

Reserve Your Copy of the Collected Works, Volume One—Christian Mysticism

The first volume of *The Collected Works of Flower A. Newhouse* will be available in Summer, 2006. This distillation of over 40 years of Flower’s talks and writings was edited by Stephen and Phyllis Isaac. It is an invaluable resource for those interested in Christian Mysticism. This hardbound volume will make a superb addition to the library of anyone seeking truth and can be useful for research and in-depth study, as well as providing inspiration for daily meditations.

Chapters include *The Mystery of God, The Lord Christ, The Holy Spirit, Spirit of Grace, Inner Perception, Experiencing God through Silence, Meditation, Prayer, Healing, Nature, and Beauty and the Arts.*

Reserve your copy now at the special pre-publication price of \$25.00. Two or more copies are \$22 each. Orders are being taken in the Christward Ministry office: 760-744-1500.

New Life for El Deseo

by Lucy Wold

The first guest cottage to be built on the grounds of Questhaven is sixty-three years old! Designed by Flower Newhouse and named *El Deseo*, meaning “The Yearning,” it joined Blue Gables, the stone cottage built in 1890 that was home to founders, Flower and Lawrence, for twelve years. Before construction began, Mexican artisans took clay soil from the land, added straw and oil to form adobe bricks, and put them out in the sun to dry. Early pictures show the newly built El Deseo standing alone on open ground awaiting the many trees and plants that would soon be added. The cottage was built with an adjoining double garage which was converted to a print shop in 1945 after moving the equipment from an earlier print shop in Vista. There, Lawrence, a printer by training, published Flower’s books and Questhaven’s many publications. A gas-operated generator powered the printing press until well after World War II when electric power lines—a most welcome improvement—reached Questhaven. Whenever the press was in use, power to everything else on the grounds came to a halt.

Early in its existence, El Deseo served as home for a time to Lawrence’s parents, “Dad and Mother Newhouse,” newly arrived from Chicago, and later to early Questhaven pioneers Glenn and Mabel Janet Lepley. Glenn, an electrician who worked at Camp Pendleton during the war years, spent his evenings and spare time helping with Questhaven’s maintenance and development. Mabel Janet became a full-time secretary for Flower and Lawrence and the Ministry. Many people, still part of the Questhaven family, fondly remember staying in El Deseo during their early visits, finding themselves truly blessed to be at the very heart of the retreat.

In 1948, as interest in Questhaven grew and the number of worshippers increased, an adobe chapel, large enough to seat nearly one hundred people, was added to the guesthouse and print shop. Recently when the renovation of El Deseo began, blueprints were found in the attic, along with a small blue spiral notebook containing detailed specifications for a “bungalow” hand-written by the Vista architect. Even more meaningful was the discovery of the original notes, written in shorthand and longhand in the 1950s, of the instructions and wisdom brought through by Flower from the Master Souls who have been such a vital part of the spiritual development at Questhaven.

Inside El Deseo, a large adobe archway separates the main room from the kitchen and bath areas. Built-in drawers and closets are ready to receive guests’ belongings as soon as

the renovation is complete. Phase One includes renewing the interior of El Deseo with new double-paned windows, new kitchen appliances, upgraded electrical, plumbing, insulation, and heating and cooling systems as well as a new roof. Phase Two will involve work on the interior and exterior of Chapelito and the repainting of the entire building. The goal is to follow as closely as possible the character of the original structure.

An early El Deseo guest book reveals the names and loving messages left behind by those who enjoyed the comfort and upliftment of this charming guest cottage over the years. Dad and Mother Newhouse returned for a visit in 1952. Fritz Kunkel, a Jungian analyst who wrote extensively on what Flower considered the major obstacle to enlightenment, the human ego and personality self, stayed in El Deseo in 1952. There is an entry from Phyllis Day on the eve of her marriage to Dr. Stephen Isaac as they were about to embark on their lifelong service to the Ministry together. Daryl and Annibelle Carlson’s names first appear in 1958. Several couples honeymooned in El Deseo, one returning on each anniversary for many years. Guests from all across the United States and many countries abroad graced the little guest house with their notes of what Questhaven meant to them—one describing El Deseo as “a delicate treasury of mystical love.”

We hope you will follow its progress as this special piece of Questhaven’s history is reborn into, as Benjamin Franklin said about his own future incarnations, “a new and more elegant edition.” Before long, El Deseo will be ready once again to receive appreciative guests who will find themselves embraced by the gentle ambiance of this lovely cottage.



Left: El Deseo in 1943.

Bottom: El Deseo in 2006 (before renovations).



If you would like to give to the building fund, please send your contributions to the ministry office.

Meet Trent Coleman

by Rev. Susan S. Cary

Early on Monday mornings, Trent Coleman parks his jade green station wagon at our office and sets out to cut trees, pull stumps, haul boulders or mow some portion of our many acres. Trent is also a faithful volunteer for Work Saturday, chairman for Sunday services, participant in retreat ceremonies, advisor to the board of trustees, and an occasional host for the Sunday coffee hour. These are outer tokens of Trent's inner dedication to Christ.

While young, Trent became acquainted with Flower and the Christward Ministry Teachings through his mother. She was an independent seeker who had tried Catholicism, the Presbyterian Church, Unity and the Society of Friends before finding this Work. She sent for Questhaven publications and had a library of Flower's books. After several moves, Trent's family settled in Tacoma where his mother connected with a group studying Flower's teachings.



A trip to Questhaven as a teenager brought Trent a private interview with Flower. She revealed to him his most recent lives and his Guardian Angel's name. Despite this spiritual boost, Trent felt oppressed by his mother's strongly vocalized religious convictions.

In high school, he got involved in drama, becoming proficient at lip-synching Al Jolson, Spike Jones and Johnny Ray. He belonged to an amateur talent circuit and performed at various local venues. Successfully winning the lead in the high school play, he became popular with the "in" set of girls for the play's duration.

Following a stint in drama at the University of Washington, he joined the Army, landing in Germany. Subsequently he returned to college, worked in a hospital, married Dorothy and had his first son, Sean. After Trent completed his degree in Speech Therapy and Psychology, he relocated the family to Redlands, California where he planned to go to graduate school. The impending arrival of a second child prompted him to find a position as a social worker for the city of San Bernardino. During that next year he applied for and

was accepted in a correctional drug program with the California Department of Corrections. Subsequent job changes took him and his family to Utah for a year, back to Tacoma for a year and then to Washington, D.C. where he was an educational consultant in the Migrant Education Program. This experience motivated him to return to graduate school for a Master's Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation at the University of Oregon in Eugene. Because his marriage ended before he completed the degree, he decided upon its completion to go to Big Sur to "find himself."

The mid-seventies found Trent returning to Tacoma. Initially he planned to get a boat, travel to Alaska and become a hermit. Providentially he got a short-term job in a women's prison, counseling drug abusers. In this setting, he met his future wife, Patti, who was a methadone counselor there. She was instrumental in helping Trent reconnect with Questhaven. Desiring to live a more spiritual life, he and his partner, Patti, moved closer to Questhaven and were married there by Dr. Stephen Isaac. After months of living in Escondido and doing construction work, Trent secured a position in vocational rehabilitation working out of his home. Within a year, he became a vocational counselor in the injured worker pain program at Sharp Rehabilitation. This work enabled him to purchase his home in San Marcos. His next step was becoming a team member for Chronic Pain Management.

In 1981 he established a private practice as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Polly Anderson was at that time the overseer who determined whether or not an individual qualified for rehabilitation. In this context, Trent had spoken with her by phone several times. In 1982, Patti left the marriage, a rapid karmic payback considering Trent had left his first wife.

This event paved the way for the relationship with Polly to quickly blossom into a happy marriage, with both participating in the activities of Questhaven. We remember especially their team efforts in staging church luncheons, delicious dinners for Thanksgiving, Christmas and Fourth of July picnics. Polly's family warmly embraced him. They helped him when she passed on and continue to cherish him as one of their own.

At this stage in life, Trent feels very blessed. He has responded to the persistent call to come closer to Christ through his inner life, the fellowship he knows with his Questhaven sisters and brothers, Flower's teachings and the work he volunteers here. Reestablishing a broken relationship with his estranged older sons has healed an emotional wound. All these steps contribute to his goal of living a balanced and joyful life. He realizes after all the searching to "find himself" that the "self" he had been seeking was really the absence of "Self." The spiritual search he needed was not the physical journeying but rather an awakening to the Christ Presence, which was always there.

Ministry Moments

By Rev. Blake Isaac

EASTER RETREAT: Special thanks to Laurel Rivera who coordinated a marvelous retreat. From communion to the Easter sunrise service, we celebrated the rising of the Christ consciousness in each of us through dance, song and worship. The Rev. Blake Isaac gave a talk on Easter Sunday entitled, *Raise Your Cross for Christ on the Mountain of God*.

LENTEN CLASSES: The theme for these Lenten classes was *All Paths Lead to God Through Christ*. They touched on the individual journey as well as the universality of Christ. The classes were very devotional in nature, including ceremonial participation by all who attended.

ELFIN FOREST FIRE TRAINING: On March 11, 2006 the Elfin Forest volunteer fire department held a training session on the retreat grounds. The firefighters practiced setting out their hoses, checking the water pressure and simulating a rescue experience. Those who were able joined them for a nice lunch, accompanied by an exciting hailstorm that arrived just before noon.

RECORDINGS: The office will continue recording our Sunday services as usual; however, we will now be making only CDs of the service, rather than tapes. All talks prior to April 1, 2006 can still be purchased or checked out in either format.

LABYRINTH: The dedication of the Questhaven Labyrinth was held on April 23. This centering structure graces the hill just below the Academy building. Those present at this site were treated to a lovely musical prelude, followed by a brief history of labyrinths, and then the consecration itself. Afterward, several persons stayed to walk the labyrinth in order to personally experience its blessings.

MERRY-GO-ROUND: Those of you who remember the merry-go-round under the oak tree by the office will be pleased to hear that it is back to its active role in the lives of young persons at our retreat. May many happy children enjoy the fellowship that comes in play.

BUILDING FUND: A building fund has been established for those who wish to help beautify El Deseo and Chapelito. These structures will provide an atmosphere to awaken the Living Christ within each of us. El Deseo will be a beautifully renewed cottage, while Chapelito will be dedicated to the Higher Ones and be used as a prayer chapel. Please contact the office for more information.

Holy Quest Class Schedule

Holy Quest IV: May 19-21. The theme for this series is *Our Call to God*. It will provide a culmination of what has been learned throughout the series, as well as inspirational ways of living the life of discipleship.

Holy Quest I: June 9-11. This is the first in the series of three-day courses based on the teachings of Flower A. Newhouse, designed to help us discover our spiritual purpose and draw closer to God. Call the office for a brochure, reservations or further information on this transforming opportunity.

We have had an enthusiastic response to the Holy Quest series and we hope you will share in this opportunity. Call the office for a brochure, reservations or further information on this spiritually expanding and transforming experience. 760-744-1500 or visit our website: <http://www.questhaven.org>.

2006 Spring/Summer Program

Sunday Services begin at 10:45 a.m.

MAY

- May 7 *The Inner and Outer Renewal of the Earth* Rev. Phyllis Isaac
May 14 *Woman as a Spiritual Influence in our World* Rev. Susan S. Cary
May 21 *Come to God with Stillness and Poise* Rev. Blake Isaac
May 28 *Memorial Day—
Remembering Our Immortality* Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire

JUNE

- June 4 *The Beauty of Wholeness* Rev. Elizabeth Wood
June 11 *Measuring Our Application of Truth* Rev. Blake Isaac
June 18 *Defining Moments in Our Lives* Rev. Phyllis Isaac
June 25 *Discovering Heaven on Earth—
Spiritualizing Our Faculties* Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire

JULY

- July 2 *The Prayer for Our Country* Rev. Blake Isaac
July 9 *Building Harmonious Global Relationships in
Keeping with Divine Will* Rev. Susan S. Cary
July 16 *Say What?—Gaining Understanding
Through Gender Language* Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire
July 23 *Our Relationship to the Great Path* Rev. Elizabeth Wood
July 30 *Nature Seeks Balance—Are You an
Extrovert, Introvert, or Ambivert?* Rev. Myrna Triggs

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Ongoing Activities—All are Invited

Please call the office for further information—760-744-1500.

Meditations on Wednesday evenings in Chapelito at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in this time of reverent attunement led by Jean Michalewicz.

Wisdom Classes held in Chapelito on alternating Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Led by Rev. Blake Isaac.

Pranic Healing Clinic: In the Academy the first Sunday of each month from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Led by Mary Clark, Ph.D.

Servers in Action: First Saturday of the month at 9 a.m.

Study Groups

Classes Studying The Christward Ministry Teachings

Monday: (2nd and 4th) at 7:30 p.m. Oceanside

Thursday: (1st and 3rd) at 1:30 p.m. Questhaven-Academy

Special Announcements

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Vernal Festival Retreat: June 24-25. Saturday will be a day of creative exploration through nature and the arts. A nature photography workshop is planned—bring your camera and join us on the trails.

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(\$15 for international mailing.)

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